

# Philo of Alexandria

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She/Her/Hers

# Who?

- Born in Alexandria Egypt in 20BCE
- Life and writings - evidence for late Second Temple Judaism ideologies and practices.
- Provided influential commentary on scriptures and Jewish Law.
  - Notably Genesis and Exodus
- Examined moral values and philosophical connections within the Law and Torah.

# What?

- ~75 Treatises
  - only 52 are extant.
- Writings
  - Exegetical
  - Philosophical
  - Apologetic/Allegorical

**Exegetical:** a critical explanation or interpretation of a text, specifically a religious text.

- Jewish, Hellenistic, Roman, and Palestinian influences.
- Important source for late Second Temple Judaism.

# Exegetical Works

Retellings with a philosophical lens to express an interpretation of the Law and Torah.

- *On the Life of Moses*
  - Law is embodied throughout history.
- *On the Life of Abraham*
  - Moses and Abraham are the ideal men who lead ideal lives.
- *On the Decalogue*
  - Summation of the Laws held within the Ten Commandments.
- *Exposition of the Laws*
  - Retelling of the Pentateuch with explanations of key events, characters, and teachings

# Philosophical Works

- *Questions and Answers*
  - Offers critical problems and solutions that are found within the biblical text.
  - Fragmented.
- *Every Good Man is Free*
  - Only the wise man can be truly free.

Philo mainly used the Septuagint as his referencing text.

- Comparison for modern and ancient literary practices and understandings.
- Greek translation and Greek analyses.

# Allegorical Works

Searches for a deeper, allegorical meaning behind what is written on the page.

***Logos*** - “reason” - Soul could ascend from a material world to a celestial realm through *logos*.

- *Allegorical Interpretation*
  - Dense and most complex piece of literature.
  - Genesis and Exodus close-text analysis.
  - Characters are personifications of human elements.
  - References Homer and Hesiod.

# Works Cited

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